

# 25 BEAUTIFUL HOMES

## WINTER CHARM *Chic spaces filled with cheer*

**Christmas tree  
decorating ideas  
and seasonal  
tablescapes**



**INSPIRATION FOR YOUR PROJECT**  
**Dreamy schemes in a coastal cottage**  
**A dramatic Victorian terrace**  
**Bold colour brings a canalside flat to life**





# HAPPY RETURNS

*A long-distance house-hunt led Pippa Norton and her family from the bright lights of Florida to the quiet beauty of the Oxfordshire countryside*

FEATURE MARISHA TAYLOR | PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES FRENCH





## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY** Grade II-listed house, built circa 1800

**LOCATION** Oxfordshire

**PURCHASED** 2016

**ROOMS** Hallway, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, snug, media room, study, utility room, boot room, basement, wine cellar, five bedrooms, two bathrooms, shower room

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'We had a Key West-style home in Miami,' says Pippa.



## SITTING ROOM

The magnificent bay window makes the perfect position for the family's Christmas tree. The two armchairs placed either side reflect the symmetry of the Georgian architecture.

Chantal armchair in White is similar, £1,150, Oka. Nordmann Fir Christmas tree, from £39.95, Pines and Needles. Baubles, £4 each, Burford Garden Company



## SITTING ROOM

'We used the fireplace and a favourite painting to centralise the seating and make the room feel symmetrical,' says Pippa. Original Pissarro artwork, price on request, Stern Pissarro Gallery. Walls in Bone China matt emulsion, £45 for 2.5L, Little Greene



## SNUG

The deep blue scheme creates an all-enveloping feel. Juicy Jute grasscloth wallcovering in Tantalizing Teal, £108 a roll, Phillip Jeffries



Returning to the UK after living abroad for eight years, Pippa Norton and her husband were keen to make the move as seamless as possible for their sons, Max, 11, and Charlie, nine. 'We had lived in five countries in eight years and it was time to settle down,' says Pippa. 'Oxfordshire had the perfect balance of excellent schools, pretty and historic market towns, beautiful countryside – and all in easy reach of London.'

As the family were previously living in Miami, house hunting was done online. 'When we saw this property, we knew it was special,' says Pippa. 'Built in the 1800s, it had a wealth of traditional features, but the interior was a sea of pink and gold gilt. It couldn't have been any more different to our modern Key West-style home but, with its full-height bay windows, original shutters and fireplaces, intricate mouldings and high ceilings, we fell in love with its charm.'

The couple wanted to restore the house to the elegant, period family home it would have once been, respecting the heritage of the building, while updating it to suit modern life. They were also keen to transform the basement from a damp cellar into a series of rooms, creating a whole new level. 'Work began on the house before we even got on the plane,' says Pippa. 'Everything needed doing – the





**DINING ROOM**  
 Formerly a dark and cold space, this room is now a warm and inviting place to relax, eat and entertain. Walls in Hardwick White estate emulsion, £46.50 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball. Balmoral six-seater table, £2,650, Neptune

**DECORATING TIP** *'To create the cosy, cocooning ambiance in the snug, we painted the ceiling and the woodwork the same colour as the wallpaper'*



**KITCHEN**  
 A large piece of artwork draws the eye with its playful, bold splashes of colour. Parrot II limited-edition giclee print by Dave White, £1,950 framed, The Drang Gallery in Padstow. Cabinetry, price on request, Andrew Lord Furniture



MASTER BEDROOM

Soft textures and calming tones of blue and cream create a restful sanctuary. Walls in Skylight estate emulsion, £46.50 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball. Try the Bowery table lamp, £90, The White Company. Bench covered in fabric similar to Jane Churchill's Fontaine, £69m



BATHROOM

Luxurious details transform this practical family space.

Panelling in Toad eggshell, £64 for 2.5L, Little Greene. Starback Straight Arm Mini wall light in Bronze, £912, Hector Finch

**LAST WORD** *'There is no better time to be here than Christmas, when we like taking long walks and relaxing in front of the fire'*



electrics, heating, tanking the basement, new floors, bathrooms and kitchen. We rented nearby and, with our belongings in storage, lived out of suitcases. Initially, we thought the renovations would take six months, but work fell behind by three months.' Tired of renting, the family moved into the house before work was finished. 'It was a dusty building site, but I felt more in control by being there,' says Pippa.

With building work finished and the family's belongings out of storage, Pippa's attention turned to the decor. Even though she had a vision of how she wanted each room to look, she felt overwhelmed by the scale of the project. 'I enlisted the help of Jo Calver from Isla James Interiors, who was able to help me put my ideas into action,' says Pippa. 'She knew where to source what I wanted and gave me a fresh perspective on rooms where I was drawing a blank.

'This was a move and a restoration project on a grand scale,' says Pippa. 'I was reluctant to leave Miami, but we have breathed life back into this beautiful old house and created a home in a quintessentially English part of the world. I really do feel incredibly fortunate.' 25